

## THE COW PUBLIC HOUSE AT BEESTON, NOTTINGHAM.

### HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD

#### SUMMARY

*In April 2007 AOC Archaeology Group carried out a programme of Historic Building Recording at The Cow Public House on Middle Road, Beeston, in advance of demolition. The 19<sup>th</sup> century building had two and a half storeys with a partial basement below. An associated building, a stable/ coach-house was also recorded. The buildings are not listed, and do not lie in a conservation area.*

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

##### Site location

- 1.1 The site lies on the southern side of Middle Road, in Beeston, Nottingham. It is bound to the east south and west by adjacent properties which will be partially removed for development of a Tesco petrol station. The building subject of this report is at National grid Reference (NGR) SK 53125 36864.
- 1.2 The Cow dominates the site, but faces southwest, rather than northwest onto Middle Road. A brick barn converted into another use is located on the west of this. The land behind The Cow comprises a former 'beer garden' and green space.

##### Planning Background

- 1.3 The local planning authority is Broxtowe Borough Council. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by Nottinghamshire County Council. A Desk Based Assessment (AOC 2005) was created to determine the archaeological potential of the area, and a Written Scheme of Investigation submitted for recording this building, plus additional work on Acacia Road (AOC 2006).

#### 2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The following work was carried out during the building recording, to make a suitable record in terms of the buildings importance and architectural interest.
  - The creation of floor plans of the building. This establishes an accurate archaeological record of the structure, and was drawn at an appropriate scale, at 1:50. Sections that illustrate the vertical relationships within the building have been compiled, with a scale of 1:50 considered the most appropriate. These will be deposited in the archive.
  - pro-forma record sheets describing the exterior and interior of the building have been completed.

- Details of the roof structure were largely visible, but the materials used have been recorded.
- All drawings will be included in the archive on a dimensionally secure medium (eg draughting film).
- The completion of a photographic survey of the building in its present condition has been made. This employed colour slide and black and white print film, supported by digital photographs.

### **3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The historic background for the site was examined in a Desktop Study (*AOC Archaeology Group 2005*), and the relevant parts summarised here.
- 3.2 Beeston has a long history, being recorded in the Domesday Book (1087) as containing three manors. Settlement within the town grew slowly with the building of a church and vicarage in the area of Church Street, and included the building of a Manor House. Small cottages were established around the area of land called the City and the street now named Nether Street. Land use in Beeston originally tended to be towards the cultivation of corn and hay, the Tithe owned by the Earl of Devonshire, and hay.
- 3.3 Traditionally textiles were manufactured in the homes of specialists or farming families, and this certainly was the case in Nottinghamshire and the area of Beeston. The introduction of factories increased textile production, and the 'Anglo-Scotian' silk mills were established on Station Road. The use of unskilled labour encouraged Luddism, and the mills were burnt down in 1831.

#### **The Owners/ Occupiers**

- 3.4 The building now the Cow public House appears to date from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and was originally a private home. It is not shown on the 1809 Tithe Map, but is thought to have been present by 1822, and known as Beeston Hall. It was the highest rated house in Beeston in the early years of the 19th century. It was the home of Rev John F.T. Woolley from 1822 to 1854, later by 1897, home of Francis Wilkinson who considerably altered the building; Wilkinson also rebuilt the Anglo-Scotian Mills in 1892 and was dead by 1897.
- 3.5 Beeston Hall changed its use in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, being marked as a club in 1938; the Manchester Unity Hall & Institute in 1956; the Beech Tree pub in 1993, and most recently the Cow at Beeston. There is an extensive beer garden with several mature trees, probably part of the Reverend Woolley's garden, and a stable/coach-house lies to its southwest.

### **Historic Map Study**

- 3.5 Of the historic maps available to this author, all Ordnance Survey maps show the building in various forms, becoming larger as it is extended northeastwards throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Many of these maps are presented in the Desk-Based Assessment (*AOC 2005*)
- 3.6 The northeastern part of the building is the most modern, and of low architectural and historic merit.

## **4 HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD**

### **THE COW PUBLIC HOUSE**

#### **General**

- 4.1 Although oriented northwest, southeast, for clarity, the building is described as north-south, the north end facing Middle Road. The main structure is made up of neat, almost gauged pink brickwork four bays and two and a half storeys in height, with a partial basement across the width of the building. Each wall of the original building is 0.38m thick, built using Flemish bond. The window reveals have stone sills and arched brick lintels. There is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century extension on the east side, and on the south side, a two storey circular bay. There is also the suggestion of a blocked window on the ground and first floors, to the south of the western side.
- 4.2 It has been considerably enlarged on its northeastern side with a number of low-quality modern extensions that have compromised the original layout of the ground floor. The first floor contains more original fabric, and the attic floor contains some elements unaltered since construction. Some window cases appear to be original. Most fireplace furniture had been removed in very recent times. The internal walls are mostly brick. The roof is a purlin roof in part, and kingpost-roof technology is also used. The roof is pitched and semi-hipped, with slate atop. An external trap to the beer cellar is located beyond the northeastern part of the building

#### **Extensions**

- 4.3 The extensions are typically built rougher bricks than the original fabric, and are generally of low architectural merit. All openings were boarded up at the time of recording, so a record of the windows and doors was not made.

#### **Ground Floor.**

- 4.4 The ground floor is largely a single open space extending to all sides of the building, most recently in use as the barroom, with low wooden dividing walls to create individual spaces, for dining, drinking and pub games. The creation of this open space necessitated the removal of some of the structural walls of the older parts of the building, to be replaced by iron girders at ceiling level, with occasional piers, chimneybreasts and partial walls remaining. The bar is centrally

- placed. The decoration is generally two-tone, with pale green above and red below a dado rail. The ceiling is red, with dentil architrave decorating each section between beams. The bar is accessed through a pair of featureless doors on the west front. To the north of the door is a window decorated with fluted pilasters in a style typical of the 1880s, and may be a replacement, perhaps even blocking an original front door, since this is central to the property.
- 4.5 As well as the bar, the Ground Floor contains several other rooms. In the northwest corner are an office and two lavatories, both for private use. In the north is a large room which is a kitchen for supplying pub food. In the southeastern corner is another toilet suite for both sexes, which can be accessed from two sides. Next to the bar is a staircase leading to the first floor and virtually opposite this is a short stair leading to the basement through a low door just 1.58m high.
- Basement**
- 4.6 The basement occupies considerably less ground-space than the ground floor, but spans the width of the building. It is accessed via a short stair from the bar, and is just 1.64m high. It is formed of a series of narrow rooms, each containing beer barrels and pump equipment to serve the bar above. A short north-south corridor leads from the staircase to another narrow room, running east west, which in turn leads to a third narrow space, again north-south which has the trap to street level for bringing in the barrels. A fourth room lies off this. At the time of recording, the cellar was under several inches of water. The walls are brick and painted white.
- First Floor**
- 4.7 The first floor is accessed up a stairway from the bar, and is likely to be in its original position to the building. Although the banister is undecorated, at the top is a panel decorated with wave mouldings, which may be original. The stairs open onto a landing which leads to all first floor rooms.
- 4.8 Directly ahead at the top of the stairs, running eastwards, is a small kitchen with a small extension beyond which contains a pair of toilets. No historic features were noted. To the south of the stair, a door opens onto one of the principal rooms of the first floor, most recently used as a function room. This occupies most of the south wall of the building, and half is probably an eastern extension to the primary building, since the roof is of different height to the main part. Also, the windows are irregularly spaced, the easternmost being slightly different to two others which light the room. The windows have cases with incised panels. In the western wall is a fireplace, now blocked. A second door leads back to the landing. At this point in the landing, the first floor is supported by a pair of decorative arches, one leading north, the other west. These relieve pressure from the storey above, so also have a structural function.

- 4.9 A second major room on this floor is in the southwest corner, and has a round bay window facing southwards. A fireplace in the east wall has been recently removed, and its surround with it. It is accessed through a door in the north, from the landing. It is suspected that the bay is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century extension, contemporary with the extension to the principal southern room: the roof is the same height and seems more in keeping with a late 19<sup>th</sup> century style.
- 4.10 The western part of the building contains three bedrooms, plus another smaller room. Each room has a separate fireplace: none share stacks back-to-back, but all mantels and furniture have been removed. The three large rooms are all bedrooms, whereas the fourth room is small, and can be accessed directly from on bedroom, and is therefore probably originally a dressing room.
- 4.11 At the end of the north-south part of the landing is a bathroom. This is probably an original fixture. All these rooms are typified by having skirting and architrave original to the building. The skirting is plain, the architrave a simple concave moulding. The doorcases are also identical and have simple neoclassical mouldings.
- 4.12 Another range of rooms lie to the east of the landing. One may have been a reception room, having a fireplace and a ceiling rose, although the date of the rose is unknown. This has been extended with a kitchen to the east with a modern fire escape.
- 4.13 A room opposite the bedroom with the dressing room, situated in the middle of the eastern wall, is currently used as an office, but suggests that the original layout of the building was very regular and symmetrical. This office is adjacent to the stairwell rising from the ground floor.
- 4.14 There is an inaccessible space c2.00m wide between these two eastern rooms. The exterior shows a window here, and evidence in the attic shows there had been a staircase here that is now bricked up or dismantled. It is not present on the ground floor. This suggests that the property may have been served by two parallel staircases rising up the eastern side of the building.

#### **Attic Floor**

- 4.15 Access to the attic was only possible through a narrow trap in the ceiling. This is an impossible situation considering the suite of rooms within. Clearly, there was a proper staircase that has now been removed/ blocked in. The attic has a central landing with bedrooms off it, each with their own fireplaces with small hob-grates within. The north facing wall of the attic space is lit by three windows, and in its original form, there were dormers along the east and west sides, three on each side. There were remnants of the windows scattered around the attic. There are four rooms on the west side of the attic and three rooms plus the lost stairwell to the west. The floor was boarded, and a ceiling of lath and plaster added at tie-beam height. Each of the rooms is very plain, with no skirting or architrave, and

the door frames plain. The doors, however, are probably original. Two rooms, one dominating the north end of this floor, and one to the south, were considerably larger than the rest, and may represent either multiple occupancy or slightly higher status. Each of the surviving grates in the fireplaces that furnished the rooms is a narrow hob-grate.

- 4.16 It is likely that these rooms were originally accommodation for servants or perhaps a nursery and later fell into disuse. The best dating evidence in these rooms was a letter post-marked April 1975, probably indicating their last occupancy, and this may have been the date when the staircase was removed.

### **Roof**

- 4.17 The roof has a shallow pitch, and is largely a purlin roof with tie beams between principal rafters. The north end is part gable end, part hipped, and this enhances the northern elevation. At the southern end of the building, the highest part of the roof, is probably the oldest, it is constructed with a King Post assembly, and is fully hipped. The southeastern part of the roof and that above the rounded bay are lower in pitch, and suggest a probable later date. Other extensions to the first floor have distinctly separate roof lines. The latest extensions to the bar area are mostly flat roofed, apart from the most modern, which have added conical segments.

## **THE STABLE OR COACH HOUSE**

### **General**

- 4.18 To the west of the site is a two storey four bay brick building most recently used by St. John's Ambulance. The most notable feature is that the brickwork is considerably rougher than that used in the Cow which gives the building a far more utilitarian appearance. The roof is shallow and pitched, and is slate. Each of the windows on the main (long) elevation has stone sills and an arched top with a central projecting keystone. The east elevation has two windows and a blocked doorway. The doorway is likely to have originally been an access to the first floor when in use as a hay loft, and would have had a hoist above. A fourth opening, to the south is a modern door. The southern and eastern elevations are largely inaccessible, but there had been a window on the ground floor. The northern elevation shows the pitch of the gable with a low, damaged chimney atop. There is a door leading to stairs to gain the first floor, and a pair of double doors led in to the main ground floor space. This northern wall has been mostly rebuilt at ground floor level, and has a large set of doors of suitable width for a carriage. There is a window and a blocked doorway on the first floor.

### **Ground Floor**

- 4.19 The ground floor has three rooms: a large room that occupies most of the floor, and this is partitioned by a modern brick wall that divided it from a room accessed through the new door. The third room houses the stairs. The floor of most of the property is concrete, but interestingly, the staircase rises for a brick floor laid in

- herringbone pattern, the bricks on edge. This was not seen elsewhere on the ground floor.
- 4.20 The internal surfaces are largely plastered and painted white. The ceiling is supported by three large principal joists running the width of the property. No historic fixtures were observed.

#### **First Floor**

- 4.21 The first floor is accessed up a set of stairs encased in hardboard. The first floor has been partitioned with a modern wall, and may have been a single open space. The partition forms a small room to the rear used for storage, and cuts across the location of a blocked external doorway. The main room is well lit by windows, and also has a blocked doorway. There is a fireplace in the front wall, now blocked. But feeding into the chimney stack that rises above the gable. This was not present on the ground floor because it had been removed when re built.

#### **Roof**

- 4.22 A simple pitched gable end roof is present. The first floor ceiling is covered with plasterboard. Neither purlins nor tie beams were visible, but a simple clasped purlin roof seems the most likely form.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The original form of the building is not immediately clear, due to significant modifications, both in recent times, and in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, the first and second floors are sufficiently unaltered to determine most of the original form of the building. It began as a rectangular building of three storeys with a cellar. The main entrance was in the southwest wall, and may have been in the location of the ground floor window with the decorative columns. The layout of the ground floor is completely open now, so the number and layout of rooms is lost. It may be assumed to have had a hall accessed from the main door, and perhaps a second door in the northwest end, and maybe an access to the gardens. A typical house of this size would have included a dining room, a drawing room, a breakfast room, a store room a wash-house and a kitchen. The stairs to the cellar are thought to be in their original location, but the stairs to the first floor must have been modified: they currently finish at the rear of the eldest part of the building.
- 5.2 The first floor has been extended, but the presence of a fireplace in each room suggests that much of the layout is unaltered. Six of these rooms are now bedrooms and this may have always been their function. It is known to have been occupied by the Reverend Woolley and his family: it is possible that he and his wife had separate rooms. The bathroom on this floor may always have had that use.
- 5.3 The second floor is in the attic level, and has a range of small, low-ceilinged rooms. They are likely to have been occupied by staff working in the house: possibly a cook, maidservants and perhaps a manservant or valet. They may also have partly formed a nursery, since the major room contained toys including a doll's house. These all had dormer windows that are now blocked. The staircase to the second floor has been blocked and could not be accessed. This suggests that there may even have been a second stair between the ground floor and first floor for servants.
- 5.4 It is known that the house was partially rebuilt by Francis Wilkinson in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The extension to the building to the southeast, creating an L-shaped building is likely to date from this time, as does the curved bay on the south corner. It is likely that all other extensions are of 20<sup>th</sup> century date, the building's use as a club and later public house requiring extensions to the ground floor. The decorative window on the southwest side may be of early 20<sup>th</sup> century date. During its use as a public house, the first floor retained its domestic character, being used by the landlord as accommodation, with some rooms rented out. The attic rooms had probably not been used since the mid-1970s.
- 5.5 The coach-house or stable standing to the southwest of the main building is likely to be contemporary or slightly earlier than the primary build. The ground floor of this may have housed a horse and carriage, the upper floor storing hay.



- 5.6 The ground of the building are now a grassed beer-garden with only one tree of any age, a copper beech perhaps two hundred years old. This may be a survival of a specimen planting dating to occupation by the Reverend Woolley.
- 5.7 The Cow at Beeston is a good example of a large early 19<sup>th</sup> century suburban villa which has been later turned into a public house. The size of the original house and the quality of its workmanship (particularly the fine external brickwork and two storey coach-house) attest to the status and wealth of the original occupants. It is likely that the encroachment of the city by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century had made the property less desirable as a genteel residence and it subsequently became a club and then a public house. This pattern of change of use from house to pub in similar large suburban villas may be seen in many British towns and cities.

## 6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**Figure 1: Site Location**

Figure 2: Detailed site location

Figure 3: Schematic phase plan

## APPENDIX A: Photograph Register

Image	Description	View	Digital	Colour	B/W
1	Southwest Elevation, The Cow	NE	Y		
2	Southwest elevation, The Cow	NE	Y		
3	Basement, The Cow	NE	Y		
4	Bar area, ground floor, The Cow	SW	Y		
5	Bar area, ground floor, The Cow	SE	Y		
6	Bar area, ground floor, The Cow	NE	Y		
7	Bar area, ground floor, The Cow	E	Y		
8	Function room, First Floor, The Cow	SW	Y		
9	First Floor doorcase, The Cow	W	Y		
10	First Floor landing, The Cow	NE	Y		
11	First Floor arch, The Cow	SW	Y		
12	First Floor architrave, The Cow	W	Y		
13	First Floor Office, The Cow	SE	Y		
14	First Floor fireplace, The Cow	E	Y		
15	First Floor Bedroom, The Cow	S	Y		
16	First Floor Bedroom, The Cow	SW	Y		
17	First Floor Kitchen, The Cow	N	Y		
18	First Floor Arches, The Cow	W	Y		
19	First Floor Kitchen Rose, The Cow	N	Y		
20	First Floor Bedroom, The Cow	W	Y		
21	First Floor Landing, The Cow	SE	Y		
22	Second Floor main room, The Cow	NE	Y		
23	Second Floor window, The Cow	N	Y		
24	Second Floor Window, The Cow	N	Y		
25	Second Floor small room, The Cow	SW	Y		
26	Second Floor Fireplace, The Cow	SE	Y		
27	Second Floor fireplace, The Cow	W	Y		
28	Second Floor fireplace, The Cow	NE	Y		
29	Roof structure, The Cow	NE	Y		
30	Roof Structure, The Cow	SW	Y		
31	Lost window, Second Floor, The Cow	N	Y		
32	Roof structure, The Cow	NW	Y		
33	Kingpost, The Cow	SE	Y		
34	Roof, The Cow	E	Y		
35	Large Second Floor Room, The Cow	SE	Y		
36	Roof, The Cow	E	Y		
37	The Cow, looking south	S	Y		
38	The Cow, Southeast elevation	NW	Y		
39	The Cow, northeast Elevation	SW	Y		
40	The Cow, looking south	S	Y		
41	The Cow, northeast elevation	SW	Y		
42	The Cow, northwest elevation	S	Y		
43	The Cow, northwest elevation	S	Y		
44	Coach-house northwest elevation	SE	Y		
45	Coach house, northeast elevation	SW	Y		
46	Coach house, northeast elevation	SW	Y		
47	Coach house, herringbone brick floor	NW	Y		
48	Coach house, steps	SE	Y		
49	Coach house, Ground Floor rear room	SW	Y		
50	Coach house, Ground Floor Main Room	SE	Y		

Image	Description	View	Digital	Colour	B/W
51	Coach house, Ground Floor main room	SE	Y		
52	Coach house, First Floor main room	NW	Y		
53	Coach house, First Floor main room	W	Y		
54	Coach house, First Floor southern room	E	Y		
55	Coach house First Floor window	SW	Y		
56	Coach house, First floor	NW	Y		

## APPENDIX B: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-27217

### Project details

Project name	THE COW PUBLIC HOUSE AT BEESTON, NOTTINGHAM.
Short description of the project	The building had two and a half storeys with a partial basement below, and appears to have been constructed in the early 19th century and modified until the present day. An associated building, a stable/ coach-house was also recorded.
Project dates	Start: 11-05-2007 End: 11-05-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	7408 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	NCMG 2006-290 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	PUBLIC HOUSE Modern
Monument type	STABLE BLOCK/ COACH HOUSE Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Annotated Sketch', 'Measured Survey', 'Photographic Survey'



Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG15

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BROXTOWE BEESTON The Cow public house
Postcode	NG9
Study area	2800.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SK 53125 36864 52.9262371316 -1.209656794990 52 55 34 N 001 12 34 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation AOC Archaeology Group

Project brief originator AOC Archaeology

Project design originator AOC Archaeology Group

Project director/manager Ron Humphrey

Project supervisor Les Capon

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Nottingham Museum

Digital Archive ID	NCMG 2006-290
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography', 'Images vector', 'Text'
Digital Archive notes	held at AOC until transfer
Paper Archive recipient	Nottingham Museum
Paper Archive ID	NCMG 2006-290
Paper Media available	'Photograph', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Unpublished Text'
Paper Archive notes	held at AOC until transfer

## Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	THE COW PUBLIC HOUSE AT BEESTON, NOTTINGHAM.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Capon, L.
Date	2007
Description	17 pages, 8 plates, three illustrations, A4
Entered by	les capon (lescapon@aocarchaeology.co.uk)
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